



## THE FARMER'S TALK TO FARMERS

### BEDQUILTS AND QUILTING BEES

(Written Specially for The Bulletin.)

Out in Indiana, the other day, died an old lady known to all her neighbors as "Grandma Bailey." For the last fifty-one years of her long life—she was ninety-one at her death—she had devoted her spare time to the old-fashioned art of making quilts. And in those fifty-one years she is reported to have "pieced" and "quilted" no less than 2,600 of these bed-coverings.

Commenting on her case The Providence Journal has this to say:—

"The quilt is becoming an obsolete institution, and in many families probably the name even is a strange word. There are modern substitutes in bed-coverings that are lighter, warmer and more desirable. The quilt, both in its use and in the method of its construction, is altogether out of harmony with the modern ideas of efficiency. It was made, usually as to one side only of hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of small bits of rags, chiefly calico, so cut as to form some symmetry of design, and laboriously sewed together. This was 'piecing' the quilt. When the patchwork fabric had grown to sufficient size, a corresponding piece of calico was used for the other side, and the whole structure bound with the edges and the surfaces threaded or 'quilted' at intervals of a foot or so, to bind them together. The quilting was done on a quilting frame, and it was frequently made the occasion of a neighborhood social function ranking in importance and interest with the quilting school and the spelling and reading 'bees'."

The social significance of these old-fashioned events could not be appreciated by the youngsters of the present day. One has to be dangerously near middle age, at least, in order to have any reminiscent thrill of sympathy of that old-time popular song, "Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party." But the social trimmings of these occasions meant much to the young members of the time. "Courtin'" was given one of its necessary aids, and proved a not unimportant by-product of the quilt-making industry.

"The final process in the making of

a quilt, this assembling of parts into the finished product, was merely a bit of ordinary industrial work; the fine artistry came in the "piecing." And many a yearning for artistic expression was satisfied through the medium of the quilt. It was a quiet art, and most of it was aesthetically horrible, but it gave the artists a curious pride of achievement, and there was something in its that spoke of comfort. Even the weirdest quilt looked good to the average person on a cold night."

I fear the Journal writer is not quite as old as one ought to be in order to speak with complete accuracy of the "quilt-making" industry. The "quilt" which completed it. It was made, he says, of hundreds and sometimes thousands of small pieces, cut and sewn together so as to make "some symmetry of design." Right, brother, as to the main fact. But, honestly, now, did you ever see many containing "thousands" of pieces? Quilts containing many hundreds and occasionally running a little over a single thousand were not unusual. But "thousands"? That must mean at least more than two thousand. In a quilt of ordinary size, assuming the pieces to be only two inches square, it would not require two thousand to do the job. And most of the pieces used were, as every fellow whose beard is gray can tell you, a good deal more than two inches square.

It is true, too, what the Journal man says, that the quilt is becoming "an obsolete institution."

More's the pity. For his next remark is very far from that strict and impeccable accuracy which should inhere in every statement of fact. "There are modern substitutes in bed-coverings that are lighter, warmer, and more desirable," he says.

What are they, please? If he means the modern factory-made "comforter," with its slazy calico outside and its stuffed, heavenly-unknown what refuse of the cotton mills in place of the carefully selected "batting" of downy whiteness and spotless cleanliness which our mothers and grandmothers used as filler, then one old graybeard must beg to differ.

In the first place grandmother afore-said made her patch-work from fragments of old dresses, aprons, etc. The garments also were originally made by her skilled fingers from the very best qualities of calico, gingham, etc., which she could find in long, wide-reaching and repeated searches through all the neighboring stores. She wouldn't make even a calico dress till she had found a pattern which suited her, not only as to printing but more especially as to quality of weave and material.

When these dresses and aprons were laid aside, the worn portions were torn off and saved for patch-work. These pieces compared with present-day prints as to quality, strength and wearing capacity about as a side of sole leather compares with a sheet of brown paper.

In the second place grandmother's quilts were made full size and for full sized men. They weren't scimped a little in width and stuffed off a little in length to save a cent or two in manufacturing costs, till they got so a man couldn't straighten his legs without without sticking his toes out into the cold world.

They were designed and made to keep the home folks comfortable—not just to sell to gullible strangers at the biggest profit obtainable. In other words, they were made on honor and for service; not with all the study that could be concealed in them to cozen misguided buyers for the greater profit of the manufacturers and sellers.

Perhaps the Journal man is thinking of blankets when he says there are modern substitutes which are "lighter and warmer." Blankets certainly are somewhat lighter than quilts, but "warmer"? Well, that

needs proving. I know that in my own case, when the wintry nights are here and the thermometer towards morning is hunting the twenties or thirties below zero, no blankets that I can buy equal in snuggling warmth a couple of the old quilts which mother made sixty years ago, and of which we still have a supply on hand for use when real need arises. "Even the weirdest quilt looked good to the average person on a cold night," concludes the Journal. You bet your boots it did; it looked good and it felt good and it was good! And if there has been anything developed modernly which is both "lighter and warmer" it hasn't yet been introduced in these particular rural wilds.

I am particularly interested, though, in the Journal's references to the past-time of "quilting bees." Many times, in the very same upper chamber in which I am writing this, have I, as a laddish little lad, seen the housewives of the neighborhood gathered for an afternoon around the old "quilt-making" (which is still preserved "upstairs"). Not only were the quilts for our own family finished here, but, as the room changed to be somewhat larger than the one in which I now sit, it was frequently borrowed by them, so that quilting bees were held there, the commonest diversions I had knowledge of as a little child. I can well recall the wonder I used to feel as I watched the ten or a dozen women seated around the quilt, and their needles with a speed and a skill which seemed to me almost uncanny.

There was some talking, too; but I do not remember that there was any large amount of "gossip" nor anything like the volubility and flippancy and chatter which I have sometimes heard more recently at gatherings of young ladies who would have considered attendance on a quilting bee as "bad form" if not worse.

When evening began to fall there was a long relief from needle work, while larger than the quilt, and which the hostess to keep the quilt, which a good many of the "men-folks" strolled in to share—and to wash dishes, clear away, and then by a general meal had been served and eaten. An hour or two more by candle-light served to complete the quilt and the long session ended. The older people drifted away first; the younger ones lingered a little, but all were at their own homes or well on the way there before 9 o'clock sounded.

Next week or perhaps week after another "bee" would call pretty much the same party to another house as another neighbor's guests and helpers.

I am personally a progressive in all

most every direction, and honestly believe in spelling Progress with a capital P. But I have occasionally seen growing boys who shot up so phenomenally and unduly early that they outgrew their trousers as fast as they could be made.

In some respects we are growing out of our breeches a little more rapidly than is good for anybody concerned. We are discarding them, now and then, while the material is still good and the buttons still all on, because we want something roomier.

Do I want to go back to the days of candlelight and no sewing-machines? Not by a long shot!

But I would, like to see the old-fashioned quilt restored to favor and the old-fashioned neighborhood and sociability and mutual helpfulness which the quilting-bee typified once more dominant in the rural districts. Eavesdropping at a telephone receiver is a mighty poor substitute for even a quilting-bee. Not only is one's best clothes for a fifteen minutes afternoon "call" is another mighty poor substitute for the quilting-bee which city limitations have imposed on city inhabitants is not only unwise for country people, to speaking frankly and confidentially, a vulgar and an extremely bad taste. "When in Rome do as the Romans do." But when you are in Rome, and you don't have to. Moreover, if your liver is all right and your circulation active and your soul fairly clean, you don't have to!

The sewing machine is a big improvement on the cambric needle; the electric light on candles of tallow or the modern kitchen range on the old "Dutch oven" which sits on the goose-quill. We don't want to lose all the good things that discovery and invention have brought us into service during the last half century.

But why, in taking them, should we give up all or any of the good things which existed before? Why can't we keep the advantages we used to have without foregoing those which are newly offered?

Finely fabricated woolen blankets are very handy things to have about the bed-room, and the quilt-room.

But I'm mighty glad, all the same, that we've got a few of mother's and grandmother's little but well-stuffed, hand sewn quilts left to fall back on.

I'm distinctly sorry for the farmers of the next generation who will have to get along without them because it has ceased to be "the thing" to make them any more.

THE FARMER.

## LETTERS FROM TWO STATES

### Tolland County

#### COLUMBIA

Arrangements for Observance of Memorial Day—Appointment of Farm Bureau Committee—What Such a Bureau Accomplishes.

The first real baseball game of the season here, was played on Columbia Green last Saturday by the local team and a team from the State of New York. The result was a victory for Columbia, 13 to 4. Today (Saturday) the Columbia team is booked to play the Lebanon nine at Lebanon.

A social dance at Bacon Hall Friday evening was well attended. Music was by Lyman's orchestra.

George Pinckney of New Haven visited his sister, Mrs. Howard Rice of this place last week.

John H. Davis and family of Hamden motored to Columbia last Saturday afternoon and spent the week end with Mrs. Davis' father, Chester Willam A. Collins of Chestnut Hill.

Lakeside Season Opening.

Columbia lake is now within a few inches of high water mark. Some of the summer cottages on its shores are already occupied and others are being rented. It promises to be a lively season at the lake.

W. N. Wells of Long Island spent the week end with the family of Conrad Schrieffer.

Memorial Day Committee.

For the proper observance of Memorial day a committee of seven has been appointed as follows: D. A. Lyman, Chairman; A. E. Lyman, Clayton Hunt, Clayton E. Lyman, William M. Wolff and Llewellyn Latham.

Gates, Place Sold.

Cecil Gates has sold his farm and buildings located in the South West district to a purchaser from New York. It is said the new owner intends to use the place as a summer residence.

Driving Mishap.

As Mrs. Alanson H. Fox and daughter, Ethel, were driving home from Willimantic Monday, they came to a sudden halt when the king bolt failed to do its duty. The horse with the forward wheels of the wagon proceeded on his way, and the remainder of the vehicle with its occupants was left in the middle of the highway. The horse and forward part of the wagon reached home all right. The ladies were taken home by a gentleman who resided near where the accident happened.

Miss Mary Dixon Welch entertained a dozen young people Monday evening at her home, Norx, by the lake.

Gave Play at Windham.

The Grange Dramatic club went to North Windham Thursday evening and presented the three act comedy, "Bar Haven," to an appreciative audience. The club is working for the improvement of Yeomen's hall.

Charles E. Hitchcock and James A. Utley were local delegates to the democratic state convention at New Haven, Tuesday and Wednesday. Mr. Hitchcock made the journey by automobile, accompanied by his family.

Judge D. A. Lyman goes to Hartford today (Saturday) to attend the annual banquet of the Press club this evening.

Farm Bureau Committee.

Prof. Irving Davis of the C. A. C. had an informal talk with several C.

lumbia farmers Tuesday evening, at Porter's hall in regard to the establishment of a farm bureau in Tolland county, the only county in the state which lacks such an organization. A committee of nine was appointed to represent the farmers of Columbia at a County meeting to be held soon, when the matter of forming such a bureau will be considered.

The grange meets next Wednesday evening when a class of five will be initiated.

This committee includes: William C. Robinson, Henry B. Hutchins, Conrad Schrieffer, P. A. Hunt, D. A. Lyman and Madison Woodway, Jr., all of which were excellent.

For Benefit of Employees.

The announcement was made Monday Col. W. H. Hall, Jr. Co. that a dividend of \$100,000 would be paid to the employees of the company.

Second—It makes it possible for the farmers of the state to secure state, county and federal funds for agricultural improvement.

Third—It makes it possible for the county to secure expert advice and expert farmer, who organizes and helps conduct campaigns for better crops, better crops, and improved markets.

Organized clubs for boys, girls and adults to teach them to grow animals and crops, and aims to strengthen the work of all farmers, striving for a more profitable agriculture, and better county life.

Fourth—Two Farm Bureau boards, directly upon the county and each individual in it, all the forces of state and nation for development of the rural community.

Story of the work accomplished in one year in one county (Litchfield).

First—A Cooperative Apple Selling association has been organized in one town, which the farmers estimate would be worth to them the first year over \$1,000.

Second—Two Dairy Herd Improvement associations have been organized and have hired expert testers and advisers.

Third—Two Studies of Farm Management Methods were made on a total of one hundred and thirty (130) farms.

Fourth—Two Schools in Agriculture of one week each were held in the Northern and Southern portions of the county. The schools were successful and four petitions for such schools next year are already on file.

Fifth—Nine institutes were conducted through the Farm Bureau with an average attendance of over 75.

Sixth—In addition to the above 99 meetings were held or addressed by the County Agent with a total attendance of 4,390 people—569 farmers were visited on their farms, largely at their own request, and 258 farmers visited the office of the Farm Bureau to consult on farm problems.

### MERROW

Mrs. Charles Latham was in Willimantic one day last week.

Miss Rose Latham spent the week end at her home in Merrow.

Miss Addie Tilden spent the week end with her sister, Miss Evelyn Tilden.

Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Tilden of Waterbury spent last week with Mr. and Mrs. Tilden's sister, Miss Evelyn Tilden.

Levi Stranger is working for M. H. Parker, repairing the roads.

Frenchmen are loading telephone poles at Merrow station for the past few days.

H. M. Whiting killed a deer in his peach orchard last week. The deer are doing a great deal of damage to the oat and rye fields in this vicinity.

Wild flowers found here this spring are arbutus, common bluebell, saxifrage, bluebells, Indian tobacco, horsetail, cowslips, anemones, blood root, hepatica, yellow adder's tongue, purple and white trillium, purple, white and yellow violets and shadowberry.

### BOLTON NOTCH

Emory Strong, Mr. and Mrs. Loren Maine, Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Skinner, and Mrs. M. A. Strong attended the funeral of Florence Strong in Windersville, Saturday.

Mrs. Jessie Robb was called to Bristol by the illness of her mother.

Mr. Newton of Manchester spent Sunday with his uncle, Dr. M. M. Maine.

Senator C. I. Talcott of Talcottville was a caller in town on Tuesday.

W. E. Rice attended the Shriners' meeting in Hartford, Wednesday.

Mrs. E. Howard was a Hartford visitor, Wednesday.

## ANDOVER

County Makes Start to Have Farm Bureau—School Pupils Organize Agricultural Club.

Herbert A. Thompson and Royal D. Webster attended as delegates the democratic state convention at New Haven.

Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Daggett, of New Haven, spent the forepart of the week here.

An old-fashioned New England supper was held in the town hall, Friday evening after which an entertainment was given, under the direction of Mrs. W. Talbot.

A large number of children gave a May basket party to Miss Hazel Carey, principal of the public school, and Miss G. Bradley, teacher of the town grade.

C. W. Johnston, of Hartford, spent Tuesday here looking over his farm. Thomas Lewis, who is now working in Manchester, spent part of Tuesday with his family here.

Wants Farm Bureau.

At the last meeting the local grange held, the first meeting in a sixty-day campaign for establishing a farm bureau in Tolland county. Professor College at Storrs was the speaker. Tolland county is the only county in the state which does not support a farm bureau.

Pupils' Agricultural Club.

The Boys' and Girls' Agricultural Club of the Andover public school was organized Monday afternoon under the direction of the local leader, Herbert A. Thompson.

The following officers were elected for the year ending December 31, 1916: President, Morris H. Cook; vice president, Norman McDonald; secretary, John H. Yarnall; treasurer, Charles W. Phelps. Nineteen members joined the club.

The boys and girls of the public school have been organized into bands to clean up the school yard. The work is rapidly progressing.

## SOUTH WILLINGTON

Minstrel Show Amuses Big Audience.—G. Hall, Jr. Company to Play 10 For Cent. Dividend to Employees.

A new car was delivered to Arthur H. Church last Saturday.

Miss Olga Publia is substituting for Miss Mary C. Miller in the primary department of the local school during the illness of the latter.

Walter A. Allen, 2nd, drove out from Hartford Sunday, spending a part of the day with Mr. and Mrs. Walter A. Allen. Charles E. Allen, who had been home for the day returned with him.

The lawn mower is calling for its share of attention these few days. In readiness to build his new house this spring. Some blasting is required in order to make the cellar.

Minstrel Show Makes a Hit.

The minstrel show given by the G. Hall, Jr. company in Social hall last week Friday evening, ranks among the most successful performances held in this village as a minstrel show.

An audience that overflowed the hall enjoyed the affair to the utmost. In addition to the minstrel show was a sketch, "The 3 o'clock Train," by George Reynolds and John Edwards, and recitations by the members of the club.

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## RIPLEY HILL

Rev. H. H. Sherman Leaves His Property to Hartford Man—Hill Top Homes Club's Fourth Anniversary Dinner.

Rev. H. H. Sherman has let his place to Mr. Ingalls of Hartford, who is to take possession the 1st of June. Mr. Ingalls is going to Glasgow, to live with his son.

Anniversary Dinner.

The Hill Top Home club held its fourth anniversary dinner, with Mrs. B. A. Greene, Thursday, May 4th. The dinner was served at one o'clock. The hostesses were Mrs. Boynton, Mrs. Conant and Mrs. Zett.

The menu included four kinds of salad, rolls, pickles, ten kinds of cake, ice cream and coffee. After lunch a well planned program followed, in this order: Scientific Farming, Julia White; Pleasures of Motorcycling, Gertrude Heston; Talks on Boats, Mrs. Clark; Pleasures of Being a Farmer's Wife, Mrs. F. Boynton; Talks on Children, Mrs. Topliff; Summer Sports, Mrs. B. Greene; Our Highways, Mrs. Fred White; Poem, Mrs. Woodworth; Book, Mrs. H. H. Sherman.

Winter, Benjamin Franklin's Life, Mrs. S. White. The roll call was answered by a short story, "Roses on Peace," by Mrs. Peterson. Letters were read from absent members: from Mrs. Secor and Miss Millie Boynton. Mrs. Peterson invited the club to meet with her on their annual picnic, August 17. Then followed music by Mrs. Conant and singing by the club, and a song by the old people.

The meeting closed after a very pleasant afternoon, with a large number present. The next meeting will be held on August 17.

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## DAVIS THEATRE

4-Shows Today—4  
At 1:45, 3:15, 6:45, 8:45

3-HIGGIE GIRLS-3  
Offering a Delightful and Original Feast of Music and Mirth

KNOX BROTHERS  
In a Delightful Comedy Musical Offering

EVELYN and DOLLY  
Two Versatile Misses in a Singing, Dancing, Roller Skating and Bicycle Act

—TRIANGLE FEATURE—  
DOUGLASS FAIRBANKS IN  
"The Habits of Happiness"

A Great Comedy Drama in 5 Parts  
"A Bath House Blunder"

Two Reels of Laughter  
Mat. 2:15; Eve. 6:45 and 8:45

## SEATS NOW SELLING FOR THE MOST WONDERFUL PLAY IN AMERICA

AT DAVIS THEATRE MONDAY and TUESDAY NIGHTS

MAY 15, 16. Desirable Seats Can Be Secured For Either Night. Sale is Very Large, Best Secure Your Seats Early.

Prices 50c, 75c, \$1.00, \$1.50

Triangle Feature—Little Meena's Romance  
Five Parts with Dorothy Gish  
Keystone Comedy—The Last Laugh  
Two Reels with Harry McCoy

THE MOTHERING HEART  
Two-Act Klein Drama

RIDING THE GOAT  
Pathe Comedy

SPECIAL WED. and THURS. Somewhere in France  
Note—Lewis Gabel who has just returned from 20 months' actual service with the British Army will tell of his experiences.

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All Seats 5c

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